

Today, U.S. Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL) proudly announced that he will be inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame this fall. The Hall of Fame is sponsored by the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Issues and recognizes Chicagoans who have made significant achievements in the community. Quigley's strong support of LGBT issues and commitment to equality over the course of his public service career earned him the rare distinction, along with over a dozen other notable inductees.

"I'm truly humbled to be recognized in such tremendous company," said Congressman Quigley. "To be included amongst these other inspiring leaders is almost as great an honor as being inducted itself. While we have accomplished quite a bit together, we still have work to do. Whether it's repealing Don't Ask Don't Tell or DOMA, it's our moral obligation to ensure that all citizens are treated with dignity and equality."

The Hall of Fame is the only government-sponsored entity of its kind that recognizes members of the LGBT community. The 2009 inductees will be honored at an event this November.

"The rich contributions made to Chicago by its various communities are important to Chicago's quality of life," said Advisory Council Chairman and Commissioner Dana V. Starks. "It is for that reason that we are pleased to recognize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and their allies with these Hall of Fame awards each year."

The 19th annual ceremony will take place from 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 12th at the Chicago Cultural Center. The event is free and open to the public. Along with Congressman Quigley, a total of fourteen other individuals, organizations, and friends of the community will be honored. A committee of prior inductees makes each year's selections from nominations submitted by members of the public.

An emerging national advocate for the LGBT community, Quigley has cosponsored over a dozen bills that work toward equality during his first 150 days in office. Immediately after being sworn in this past April, Quigley's first act in Congress was to co-sponsor the Hate Crimes bill, not long after which he called for the repeal of the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy and joined Reps. Barney Frank, Tammy Baldwin, and Jared Polis to introduce the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. Quigley also sent a personal letter to President Obama urging him to include same-sex marriages in the 2010 Census. Most recently, Quigley stood with fellow cosponsors at an event to introduce the Respect for Marriage Act, legislation to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA, photo below).

Quigley is a member of the Congressional Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equality Caucus. Back at home, he has formed a district LGBT Advisory Council of community leaders to function as a resource on important issues as well. Over sixty community leaders are already engaged members of the Council.

As Cook County Commissioner (1998-2009), Quigley worked tirelessly to ensure that Cook County did not do business with groups that discriminate based on sexual orientation. Additionally, Quigley passed two groundbreaking ordinances that extended health benefits to gay and lesbian partners of County employees and created the Cook Country Domestic Partnership Registry, which allows domestic partners to more easily secure benefits for one another.

A full list of the 2009 inductees follows, courtesy of the City of Chicago.

Individuals

Paula Basta, 53, for her long-term work in improving the lives of senior citizens, especially LGBT senior citizens, and promoting women's and LGBT rights.

Lou Conte, 67, for the legacy he has created through the Lou Conte Dance Studio and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, both of which continue to contribute to the arts and culture community in Chicago and beyond.

Lori A. Cooper, 42, a Chicago police sergeant, for her focus on LGBT issues, which has led to significant policy changes within the Police Department, especially the creation of the LGBT liaison position, which continues to serve a vital function for the LGBT community.

Marcia J. Lipetz, Ph.D., 62, for her long history of leadership, energy, passion, and vision for Chicago's LGBT community and the institutions affiliated with it, especially for her work with the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, the WPWR-TV Channel 50 Foundation, and Center on Halsted.

Amy Maggio, 60, for her leadership in LGBT and HIV/AIDS issues, including her experience in development, marketing, and public relations for organizations in both the non-profit and private sectors.

Joey McDonald, 54, for his strong commitment to improving the quality of life for members of Chicago's LGBT communities, particularly his work with people living with HIV/AIDS, his leadership in the recovery community, his mentorship in the leather community, and his advocacy for LGBT equality,

Frank M. Robinson, 83, journalist, novelist, and award-winning science fiction writer, for creating the gay and lesbian community tabloid newspapers that catalyzed the emergence of the gay press in Chicago, and also for his service as speech writer for gay activist and politician Harvey Milk.

Jane M. Hussein Saks, 47, social and political activist, cultural advocate, and leader, for challenging and championing issues of gender, sexuality, race, and power within the worlds of

arts and culture, politics and civil rights, academia, and philanthropy.

Zaida Sanabia, 24, filmmaker and activist, for founding “Amiguitas,” the first queer Latina youth group in Chicago and for documenting the struggles of starting a gay-straight alliance in her high school in her film “A Fish Almost Eaten by a Shark,” which has been screened nationwide to educate and train school administrators on creating safe schools for LGBT youth.

Patrick Sinozich, 50, for enriching Chicago’s LGBT communities through the gifts of song, dance, and entertainment by his involvement with and direction of the former Windy City Gay Chorus and the current Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus.

Jorge Valdivia, 34, for creating safe spaces and building visibility for the Latino LGBT community through media, arts, and public service, and particularly for founding Homofrecuencia, the nation’s first Spanish-language radio program focusing on LGBT issues.

Organizations

AIDS Foundation of Chicago, for 24 years of helping to lead the fight against HIV/AIDS by promoting cooperation among service providers at work across Chicago's various communities, making more than \$18 million in grants to agencies coping with AIDS in those communities, aiding the housing needs of persons with HIV/AIDS, and advocating for sound government HIV/AIDS policy.

Friends of the Community

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Chicago), for supporting sexual-minority rights as a City Council legislative aide and Cook County Board commissioner, and now as a member of Congress, where he has joined the LGBT caucus and backs the movement to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and the Pentagon's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, as well as supporting efforts to end employment discrimination and achieve other LGBT justice goals.

Marilyn Urso, R.N., for her service from 1990 to 2007 as research registered nurse for the Howard Brown Health Center's Multi-Site AIDS Cohort Study (MACS), the world's largest epidemiological study on sexual practices and how they relate to the transmission of HIV, where she furnished warm, welcoming support to the participants and other important services on- and off-site, becoming what some clients called their “second mother.”